

DEBATE TERMS

Often people who don't believe the Bible will say that they aren't interested in hearing about the Bible. They want real proof that there's a God who created. They'll listen to our claims about Christianity, but they want proof *without mentioning the Bible*.

If one agrees to a discussion without using the Bible as these people insist, then we have allowed *them* to set the terms of the debate. In essence these terms are:

1. "Facts" are neutral. However, there are no such things as "brute facts"; *all* facts are interpreted. Once the Bible is eliminated from the argument, the Christians' presuppositions are gone, leaving them unable to effectively give an alternate interpretation of the facts. Their opponents then have the upper hand as they still have *their* presuppositions.
2. Truth can/should be determined independent of God. However, the Bible states: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:10); "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7); "but the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

A Christian cannot divorce the spiritual nature of the battle from the battle itself. A non-Christian is *not* neutral. The Bible makes this very clear: "The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who does not gather with Me scatters" (Matthew 12:30); "And this is the condemnation, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the Light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

Agreeing to such terms of debate also implicitly accepts *their* proposition that the Bible's account of the universe's history is irrelevant to understanding that history!

ULTIMATELY, GOD'S WORD CON-VICTS

1 Peter 3:15 and other passages make it clear we are to use every argument we can to convince people of the truth, and 2 Corinthians 10:4–5 says we are to refute error. Nonetheless, we must never forget Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is living and powerful and

sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing apart of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Even though our human arguments may be powerful, ultimately it is God's Word that convicts and opens people to the truth. In all of our arguments, we must not divorce what we are saying from the Word that convicts.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

When someone says they want "proof" or "evidence," not the Bible, one might respond as follows:

You might not believe the Bible, but I do. And I believe it gives me the right basis to understand this universe and correctly interpret the facts around me. I'm going to give you some examples of how building my thinking on the Bible explains the world and is not contradicted by science.

One can of course do this with numerous scientific examples, showing, for example, how the issue of sin and judgment is relevant to geology and fossil evidence; how the Fall of man, with the subsequent Curse on creation, makes sense of the evidence of harmful mutations, violence and death; or how the original "kinds" of animals gave rise to the wide variety of animals we see today.

CHOOSE A TOPIC AND DEVELOP IT:

For instance, the Bible states that God made distinct *kinds* of animals and plants.

Let me show you what happens when I build my thinking on this presupposition. I will illustrate how processes such as natural selection, genetic drift, etc. can be explained and interpreted. You will see how the science of genetics makes sense based upon the Bible. Evolutionists believe in natural selection—that is real science, as you observe it happening. Well, creationists also believe in natural selection. Evolutionists accept the science of genetics—well, so do creationists.

However, here is the difference: evolutionists believe that, over millions of years, one kind of animal has changed into a totally different kind. However, creationists, based on the Bible's account of origins,

believe that God created separate kinds of animals and plants to reproduce their own kind; therefore, one kind will not turn into a totally different kind.

Now this can be tested in the present. The scientific observations support the creationist interpretation that the changes we see are not creating new information. The changes are all within the originally created pool of information of that kind—sorting, shuffling or degrading it. The creationist account of history, based on the Bible, provides the correct basis to interpret the evidence of the present; and real science confirms the interpretation.

AFTER THIS DETAILED EXPLANATION, CONTINUE:

Now let me ask you to defend *your* position concerning these matters. Please show me how *your* way of thinking, based on *your* beliefs, makes sense of the same evidence. And I want you to point out where my science and logic are wrong.

In arguing this way, a Christian is

1. using biblical presuppositions to build a way of thinking to interpret the evidence.
2. showing that the Bible and science go hand in hand.
3. challenging the presuppositions of the other person (many are unaware they have these).
4. forcing the debater to logically defend his position

consistent with science and his own presuppositions (many will find that they cannot do this).

5. honoring the Word of God that convicts the soul.

If Christians really understood that all evidence is actually interpreted on the basis of certain presuppositions, we wouldn't be in the least bit intimidated by the evolutionists' supposed "evidence." We should instead be looking at the evolutionists' (or old-earthers') interpretation of the evidence, and how the same evidence could be interpreted within a biblical framework and confirmed by testable and repeatable science. If more creationists did this, they would be less likely to jump at flaky evidence that seems startling but in reality has been interpreted incorrectly in their rush to find the knockdown, drag-out convincing "evidence" against evolution that they think they desperately need.

And remember, it's no good convincing people to believe in creation, without also leading them to believe and trust in the Creator and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. God honors those who honor His Word. We need to use God-honoring ways of reaching people with the truth of what life is all about.

(Taken from "What's the Best 'Proof' of Creation?" by Ken Ham, *War of the Worldviews*, Answers in Genesis, 2005, pp. 145–158. More information on this topic is available at www.answersingenesis.org/go/proof.)

LESSON 10 OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

HERE'S THE CHALLENGE

You will need notebook paper, a pen or pencil, your student workbook, and your Bible

HAVE YOU EVER LED SOMEONE TO THE LORD?

One of the first ways you can be a witness to someone is to share your own personal testimony of faith with them. If you're not sure what they believe, it is always a wise idea to share the Gospel using Genesis as your starting point, showing where and when sin entered the world.

Your job will be to write out your personal testimony and give a written presentation of the Gospel beginning with Creation (feel free to use the Answers in Genesis website to help out: www.answersingenesis.org/goodnews)

Be prepared to share this information with your leader and/or with the class.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world
that He gave His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him should not perish
but have everlasting life.